CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   A method in a network of data processing systems for
2   optimizing the efficiency with which a serial electronic
3   publication is distributed to subscribers, said method
4   comprising:
5   electronically transmitting a first issue of a
6   serial electronic publication to a subscriber;
7   determining whether said first issue has been opened
8   by said subscriber; and
9   electronically transmitting a second issue of said
10 serial electronic publication to said subscriber only
11 after determining that said first issue has been opened.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein:
        said step of electronically transmitting said issue
comprises electronically transmitting said issue to a
client data processing system associated with said
subscriber; and
        said step of determining whether said first issue
7   has been opened comprises receiving a status update from
8   said client data processing system indicating that said
9   first issue has been opened.

1   3.   The method of claim 2, wherein:

2   said method further comprises storing a subscriber

3   status in accordance with said status update, in response

4   to receiving said status update from said client; and

5   said step of determining whether said first issue

6   has been opened is performed with reference to said

7   subscriber status, such that said subscriber status

8   enables said determination to be performed without

9   communicating with said subscriber after said first issue

10   has been transmitted.

1   4.   The method of claim 3, wherein:

2   said method further comprises determining that a

3   publication time for initiating distribution of an issue

4   of said serial electronic publication has been reached;

5   and

6   said step of determining whether said first issue

7   has been opened is performed in response to said

8   determination that said publication time has been

9   reached.

1   5.   The method of claim 3, wherein:

2   said step of transmitting said first issue comprises

3   transmitting a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) cookie

4   to said subscriber with said first issue; and

5   said step of receiving said status update comprises

6   receiving a cookie response from said subscriber

7   indicating that client software has been utilized to open

8   said first issue.

6.   The method of claim 3, wherein said step of
receiving said status update comprises receiving, at a
server data processing system, a hypertext transfer
protocol (HTTP) function for storing said subscriber
status.

7.   The method of claim 2, further comprising:
        determining that a publication time for initiating
distribution of an issue of said serial electronic
publication has been reached; and
        automatically transmitting a status request to said
subscriber in response to said determination that said
publication time has been reached;
        wherein said step of receiving said status update
comprises receiving, from said subscriber, a status reply
that corresponds to said status request and comprises
said status update.

8. A data processing system with facilities for
transmitting a serial electronic publication to
subscribers efficiently, said data processing system
comprising:

a push engine that electronically transmits a first
issue of a serial electronic publication to a subscriber;
and

a status manager that determines whether said first
issue has been opened by said subscriber, and that allows
said push engine to transmit a second issue to said
subscriber only after determining that said first issue
has been opened.

9. The data processing system of claim 8, wherein:
said data processing system comprises a server data
processing system;

said push engine transmits said first issue to said
subscriber by transmitting said first issue to a client
data processing system associated with said subscriber;

said server data processing system includes an input
module that receives a status update from said
subscriber; and

said status manager determines whether said first
issue has been opened by reference to said status update.

10. The data processing system of claim 9, wherein:

said server data processing system comprises storage
for storing a subscriber status that corresponds to said
status update in response to receipt of said status
update; and

said push engine determines whether said first issue
has been opened by reference to said subscriber status,
such that said subscriber status enables said
determination to be performed without communicating with
said subscriber after said first issue has been
transmitted.

11. The data processing system of claim 10, wherein:

said server data processing system includes a timer
that indicates when a publication time for initiating
distribution of an issue of said serial electronic
publication has been reached; and

said push engine determines whether said first issue
has been opened in response to said indication of said
timer.

12. The data processing system of claim 10, wherein:

said push engine transmits a hypertext transfer
protocol (HTTP) cookie to said subscriber with said first
issue;

said status update comprises a cookie response
received from said subscriber; and

said cookie response corresponds to said HTTP cookie
and indicates that client software has been utilized to
open said first issue.

13. The data processing system of claim 10, wherein said status update comprises a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) function, received at said server data processing system, for storing said subscriber status at said server data processing system.

14. The data processing system of claim 9, wherein:

said server data processing system includes a timer that indicates when a publication time for initiating distribution of an issue of said serial electronic publication has been reached;

said status manager automatically transmits a status request to said subscriber in response to said indication of said timer;

said input module receives a status reply from said subscriber that corresponds to said status request; and

said status reply comprises said status update.

15. A program product for efficiently transmitting a
serial electronic publication from a server data
processing system to subscribers, said program product
comprising:

    a push engine that electronically transmits a first
issue of a serial electronic publication from a server
data processing system to a subscriber; and

    a status manager that determines whether said first
issue has been opened by said subscriber, and that allows
said push engine to transmit a second issue to said
subscriber only after determining that said first issue
has been opened; and

    a computer usable medium encoding said push engine
and said status manager.

16. The program product of claim 15, wherein:

    said push engine transmits said first issue to said
subscriber by transmitting said first issue to a client
data processing system associated with said subscriber;

    said computer usable medium also encodes an input
module that receives a status update from said
subscriber; and

    said status manager determines whether said first
issue has been opened by reference to said status update.

1   17. The program product of claim 16, wherein:

2   said computer usable medium also encodes

3   instructions for allocating storage in said server data

4   processing system for storing a subscriber status that

5   corresponds to said status update;

6   said status manager stores said subscriber status in

7   said storage in response to receipt of said status

8   update; and

9   said push engine determines whether said first issue

10 has been opened by reference to said subscriber status,

11 such that said subscriber status enables said

12 determination to be performed without communicating with

13 said subscriber after said first issue has been

14 transmitted.

1   18. The program product of claim 17, wherein:

2   said server data processing system includes a timer

3   that indicates when a publication time for initiating

4   distribution of an issue of said serial electronic

5   publication has been reached; and

6   said push engine determines whether said first issue

7   has been opened in response to said indication of said

8   timer.

1   19.   The program product of claim 17, wherein:

2   said push engine transmits a hypertext transfer

3   protocol (HTTP) cookie to said subscriber with said first

4   issue;

5   said status update comprises a cookie response

6   received from said subscriber; and

7   said cookie response corresponds to said HTTP cookie

8   and indicates that client software has been utilized to

9   open said first issue.

1   20.   The program product of claim 17, wherein said status

2   update comprises a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP)

3   function, received at said server data processing system,

4   for storing said subscriber status at said server data

5   processing system.

1   21.   The program product of claim 20, wherein:

2   said server data processing system includes a timer

3   that indicates when a publication time for initiating

4   distribution of an issue of said serial electronic

5   publication has been reached;

6   said status manager automatically transmits a status

7   request to said subscriber in response to said indication

8   of said timer;

9   said input module receives a status reply from said

10   subscriber that corresponds to said status request; and

           said status reply comprises said status update.